

Thomas Danehy
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RE: Department of Education's Legislative Agenda

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Representative Exum and Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is **Thomas Danehy** and I am from **West Hartford**. I am asking for your support in addressing two important priorities: non-Sheff magnet school tuition and minority teacher recruitment (MTR) for all districts.

Tuition for non-Sheff magnet schools in Connecticut have had one increase of 2% over the past 18 years. Imagine your household budget if your income went up by 2% over 18 years. That's incredible and hardly a good way to sustain choice for parents in regions of the State outside of Hartford County. Costs for transportation, utilities, salaries, and insurances have only increased over this same nearly twenty years. It's high time the state increased its tuition paid to non-Sheff magnet schools.

In another matter, it is vitally important that the State of Connecticut do its part to improve the learning experiences of students throughout the state. A great way to do that while supporting workforce development, is by designating \$5.5 million as a line item in the State Department of Education section of the state budget to support the effort of any Connecticut district partnering with a Residency Program that is specifically committed to training teachers of color.

One program that supports this effort is [CT-TRP](#), which is an 18th-month alternative route to certification program that provides residents with a salary and benefits while attending courses. They also work side-by-side with a mentor teacher for the school year and are guaranteed a full-time teaching position upon completion of the program and certification requirements. Over three years, CT-TRP has already included 69 residents of color. With your support, this will increase by up to 120 new teachers of color in CT in the next two years. In addition, this hands-on training is a pathway to a lifelong career and economic stability for those who are underemployed or unemployed.

While well intentioned, the funding mechanism enacted for MTR for Residency Programs within the 2022-23 biennial budget is inadequate to meet the needs of recruiting and retaining teachers of color across all CT public schools.

I appreciate your consideration of this important request and look forward to the state financially supporting both non-Sheff magnet schools in Connecticut as well as the teacher residency program.